

MISCELLANEOUS
LETTERS,

Giving an Account of the

WORKS
OF THE
LEARNED,

Both at Home and Abroad.

To be Published Monthly.

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L O N D O N ;

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THese Miscellaneous Letters having been generally approv'd, and meeting with no other Objection, but that the Publication of them Weekly was judg'd too frequent ; We have therefore resolv'd to convert them into a Monthly Book of 6 d. price, to be publish'd the first Week of every Month : And do hereby give notice to the Publick, that we are so well provided with Foreign Books, and have settl'd such a good Correspondence beyond Sea, that no valuable Book can escape us : So that we can assure the Reader of the best Entertainment which the Common-Wealth of Learning affords.

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Miscellaneous Letters.

Les vies des Hommes illustres de Plutarque ; *i. e.* Plutarch's *Lives of Illustrious Men*, translated into French, with Remarks : By Monsieur and Madam Dacier, in 12^o, Paris, 1694.

S I R,

Plutarch's *Lives* is a Book that may be always read with Profit, because his Narratives are animated throughout by Precepts of the highest Philosophy, which he clothes with Human Shape, if we may be allowed to speak so, and makes use of them pertinently to render the Actions of particular Men general, that so they may be agreeable and profitable to the whole World. They must needs also be pleasant to the Reader, because they are not Histories, but the Great Men themselves whom we see and hear. This is justly due to the Book itself as it came out of the Hands of the Author, and may be called its Original Excellence ; but it hath received so many new Graces in passing through the Hands of its new Translators, and is so much enriched with the curious Remarks of that Learned Couple, that we doubt not but the Publick will be very glad to be made Partakers of their profound Erudition, which hath rendred them so famous in the Common-wealth of Learning.

Our Design then is not to draw *Plutarch's* Heroes in Minature, who are so well known to the World already, but only to give an Account of this Translation, and the Translators Remarks.

Monsieur and Madam *Dacier* have taken Care in this Translation, to illustrate whatever they thought obscure or perplex'd in the Historian's Discourse ; they have softned such Strokes as were

too strong and bold, and which the Purity of the French Tongue would not admit : but in giving the Discourse that Life which a scrupulous Affectation of Purity of Language makes it often to lose ; they have never neglected Neatness nor Elegance ; and after all they think it no Impeachment of their Modesty to assure us themselves, that there is no Translation that can be more faithful nor literal. And in their Remarks they don't criticize upon Words, as thinking that there's nothing more dry, disagreeable, and less profitable, especially in such a Work as this ; but they have omitted nothing that could illustrate Antiquity, as the Customs, Sacrifices, Feasts and Ceremonies both publick and private ; they point out the different Sources whence *Plutarch* drew his Information ; and when Traditions differ, they endeavour to discover the Reasons of his Choice, and supply his Omissions when they are any thing remarkable. Above all they apply themselves to explain the Sentiments of their Historian, to discover their Beauties or Defects, as thinking themselves at liberty to dispute it with him throughout when they conceive him mistaken.

Having given you these general Observations, we come now to some of the particular Remarks. And,

1. Upon *Plutarch's* commending the Athenians for the Honour which they did to the Memory of *Chonnidus* who bred up *Theseus*, and mocking at those which they did to the Memory of *Silanion* and *Parrhasius*, who had made the Statues and Portraits of those Heroes. Our Commentators say that it is a very fine Thought ; for in Effect, where's the Comparison ? The Statuary and Painter do nothing but represent the Lineaments of the Body, whereas a Governour forms the Manners and Spirit, elevates the Soul, and inspires it with Vertue. These deserve Commendation as excellent Workmen, but he is to be honoured as a Benefactor to Mankind, and the sole Cause of all the great Actions which make up their Happiness.

2. Young People were not formerly permitted to marry, except they had before-hand consecrated their Hair to *Apollo*. According to *Plutarch* this Custom was much older than *Theseus* ; but *Eustathius* says that *Theseus* was the first who consecrated his Hair at *Delos*, and not at *Delphos*, as *Plutarch* alledges ; but the Remark that we have here makes us doubt the Truth of what others have advanced. It would seem that the *Trezenians* were the only
Greeks

Greeks who observ'd that Custom of consecrating the first of their Hair, and that it did not begin till after *Theseus*, because that Consecration was perform'd in Honour of *Hippolitus* Son to that Hero. We understand also that the *Assyrians* had the same Custom, the Boys offering their Hair, and the young Men the first Down of their Chin.

3. It was a common Proverb among the Grecians, *The Athenians for the Sea*. It's said that the first Vessel which they had was the Ship *Argos*: But our Authors observe that to be false; for according to the Testimony of *Eumelus*, a Poet as antient as *Homer*, it appears that *Aetes* was a *Corinthian*, and went from thence to *Colchos* with his Daughter *Medea*; but however that is, it's certain that it was a long time before the *Athenians* applied themselves to Marine Affairs: for they did not begin to be noted for Sea-men till under *Theseus*, and made but small Progress in Navigation for 700 Years, viz. from the War of *Troy* to the Battel of *Marathon*.

4. To teach us how to distinguish *Pherecydes* of the Isle of *Syros*, from him who was Native of *Leria*, they tell us that the latter was an Historian, and the other a great Philosopher and Divine, and the first who found out the Eclipses, and held the Immortality of the Soul; he flourish'd in the time of *Servius Tullius*, 550 Years before Christ.

5. *Pausanias* writes that the Statue of *Venus*, which was consecrated to *Apollo* by *Theseus*, was form'd underneath like a square Pillar: Upon which it is observed, that until the time of *Dedalus* they knew not how to make Feet to Statues, he being the first that added them, on account whereof it was said that his Statues were alive and walk'd, which must be understood of his last Workmanship.

6. They discover that *Plutarch* mistakes in saying that *Theseus* was the first who establish'd the *Isthmick* Plays, which the Greeks were to celebrate by his Order in Commemoration of him and Honour of *Neptune*; whereas he only renewed them, *Sisyphus* King of *Corinth* having establish'd them in Honour of *Melicerta* 150 Years before: but they were discontinued, because all the Roads were fill'd and infested by armed Robbers, who being defeated by *Theseus*, he re-establish'd those Plays, and ordered them to be solemnized by Day, whereas they were formerly solemnized

by Night. They do also oppose *Plutarch*, who says that the Olympick Games were establish'd by *Hercules*, and say that they were instituted by *Iphitus* in the Year of the World 3174, almost 450 Years after *Hercules*.

7. Our Historians mock at the History of the *Amazons*, than which they say there's nothing more fabulous: And *Strabo* hath well observed, that those Historians who wrote of *Alexander*, and are of best Note for their Veracity, as *Aristobulus* and *Ptolomy*, don't say one word of them, the very recital of their Names being enough to discover the Lie; *Hippolite*, *Otrera*, *Lampeto*, *Pentaflea*, *Menalippe*, *Antiope*, being all Greek Names, and no reason to be given why such should be found among the *Scythians*. Nevertheless this Fable of the *Amazons* was so pleasing to the *Athenians*, that they ordered *Mico* to paint their Battel with *Theseus* in the Gallery called *Peicile*.

8. The Historian says that *Theseus* offered Sacrifice to *Fear* the Evening before he was to give Battel, that it might not seize upon his Troops; and *Alexander* did the like on some occasions, because the Pagans feigned to themselves Gods of the several Passions, to whom they offered Sacrifice to prevent their Effects.

9. The eldest Daughter of the Kings of *Spain* and *Portugal* are always called *Infanta*, which they will have to be derived from the Custom of *Epirus*, where the eldest of the King's Daughters was always called *Coré*, which signifies the Daughter.

10. All Weapons in the time of *Theseus* were of Brass, which appears manifestly by *Homer's* Description of *Pisander's* Pike, and *Merion's* Dart; and *Pausanias* confirms the same by *Achilles's* Pike, and *Memnon's* Sword, which was kept in his time in the Temple of *Minerva* in a City of *Pamphylia*, and the other at *Nicomedia* in the Temple of *Vulcan*.

In reading the Life of *Romulus* it appears immediately, that Historians don't agree as to the Origine of *Rome* which was Mistress of the World. This Obscurity is supposed to proceed,
1. From this, that her first Inhabitants did not so much employ themselves in writing Histories as in pillaging their Neighbours, at which they were very dexterous; that People being at first made up of a Concourse of Brigands, Fugitive Slaves, and miserable Exiles. 2. Because the Greeks did not at that time much trouble themselves to observe what passed in *Italy*, there being then

then no Authors but in the *Asiatick Greece*, and those also Poets, and not Historians: The Care of writing History not having commenc'd till a long time after.

The second Remark is upon the antient way of Dating among the Romans: Their Months were Lunar, and they reckon'd by Nones, Ides and Calends. The Day of the Nones was the first Quarter, and the Ides the day of the Full Moon; so that there were always eight whole days betwixt the Nones and the Ides: When the Nones were on the 5th of the Month, the Ides were on the 13th; and when the Nones were on the 7th, the Ides were on the 15th; so that the Nones were the 9th day before the Ides, and thence they had their Names. And the Romans counted always before the Nones and the Ides, *the first, the second, the third day before the Nones or Ides of such a Month*, i. e. *the first, second or third day before the first Quarter or Full Moon*. The word Ides seems to come from the Greek word *Ἰδὸς*, a Face, because on that day the whole Face of the Moon was to be seen. As to what concerns the Calends, it was the first of the Month, the first of the Moon, and was derived from the antient word *calare*, to declare or publish, because on that day the Pontif did publish what day the Nones and Ides should fall on. From the Ides, that is to say, from the Full Moon to the Calends of the following Month, or to the New Moon, there were sometimes 15, sometimes 16 days, which were reckon'd with regard to the following Month.

3. In the time of *Romulus* the Latin Tongue was a Mixture of Greek and the Language of the Country; and its vicious Pronunciation made it approach nearer the *Æolick* than any other of the Grecian Dialects. And they take notice in another, that as the Latin Tongue did refine gradually under *Numa Pompilius*, the *Æolick* Terms which were used at first grew obsolete.

4. When *Plutarch* says that *Romulus* did institute the keeping of the sacred Fire, it must be understood at *Rome*; for that Fire was preserv'd at *Alba*, and there were Vestal Virgins before *Romulus*, his Mother having been one. This eternal Fire was not only preserv'd at *Rome*, but also in *Egypt*, and almost all other Nations. They learned this Custom from the Hebrews, to whom *Moses* had given that Law, which oblig'd the Priest to keep Fire upon the Altar, and to add Wood to it every Morning that it might be always kept burning.

5. They

5. They observe that Inscriptions were not put upon Statues till a long time after *Romulus*, and that at first they consisted only of the Name or Dignity of those who erected them, and that for 600 Years there were none of those tedious and pompous Inscriptions upon Statues at *Rome*, which Vanity invented afterwards.

The Historian says that *Aristocrates* of *Sparta*, Son to *Hipparchus*, is the only Author who hath writ that *Lycurgus* travelled as far as the *Indies* to converse with the *Gymnosophists*: but our Commentators say positively that this cannot be, seeing *Alexander* was the first who opened the way to the *Indies* for the Greeks, which was more than 500 Years after *Lycurgus*; the Expeditions of *Bacchus* and *Hercules* being meer Fables.

In the Life of *Numa Pompilius* the Institution of the Princes of the Priests, whom they call *Pontifs*, is attributed to that King. To which it is added in the Remarks, that *Numa* created four of them, the first being called the Sovereign Pontif, and they were all of the Patricians. In the 453^d Year of *Rome* four *Plebeians* were added: And in *Sylla's* time the Number was increased to 15. *Plutarch* says that *Numa* himself was thought to have been the first of those Pontifs; which Mistake was occasion'd by the Likeness of Name, *Numa Marcius*, Son to the Senator *Marcius*, being the first who was chosen Pontif.

2. The *Feciales*, or Heralds, were instituted at *Rome* by *Numa*, who learned the same from the antient People of *Latium*, or those of *Ardea*; and 'tis not doubted but this Custom was brought into *Italy* by the *Pelasgi*, before whose Armies those sacred Persons did always march, armed only with a *Caduceum* adorned with small little Strings. They were also called *Oratores*, whence it's concluded that they were called *Feciales*, *quasi Faciales*, from the word *fari* to harangue, or make a Speech. When the Romans had received Injury from any People, one of those Heralds was sent to them all alone, and never went oftner than twice, the first time to demand the Reason of the Injury, and allowed them 33 Days to give their Answer: If they did not do him Justice, he returned, took his Collegues with him, and at the Head of his Company made a Report thereof to the Senate, to whom he gave full Power to make War. The War being resolv'd on, he return'd the second time into the Enemies Country; and being entred the same, declared the Cause of the War in Presence of the three Witnesses, throw-

throwing a bloody Dart burnt at one End, and this was esteem'd a sufficient Declaration of War.

3. In the Remarks there are many things relating to the antient Reformation of the Calendar, which is ascrib'd to *Numa*; but our Commentators do rather think due to *Tarquin* the Antient. They do also explain the *Mensis intercalaris*; and how after that the Calendar had been six or seven times reform'd, *Julius Cesar* remedied the Disorder which was in the Years: And here they do also treat how the Arcadians, Egyptians, and Antient Romans measured their Years; with which they mix divers considerable Observations.

4. *Plutarch* having writ an admirable Treatise, wherein he proves that Superstition is more dangerous than Atheism or Irreligion, he does in another Treatise prefer Superstition to Atheism, which they reconcile thus: In the first Treatise they say that *Plutarch* considers Superstition in reference to the Ideas which the Superstitious entertain of God: And in the second, he considers it with relation to Civil Society, and the Actions which it produces; a Superstitious Man being always a better Citizen than an Atheist, for he is at least restrain'd by Fear and Dread.

5. *Numa* forbid Women the Use of Wine; and before him *Romulus* condemned Women who drank Wine to that same Punishment he condemned those to who committed Adultery, saying that Adultery opened the Sluce to all other Crimes, and that Wine opened the Gate to Adultery. And in the Ages following, they did not condemn Women to Death for drinking Wine, but only to lose their Dower.

6. That the Procreation of Children being the sole End of Marriage, we must not marry Damsels too young if we would have the Children strong and robust; for it is with Men as with Plants, the youngest Fruit is for the most part imperfect and unprofitable: and for this Reason it was, that the famous Oracle given to the *Trezenians*, That they died because they eat their Fruit too green, was interpreted, that they married their Wives too young.

Solon, when he was a young Man, followed Merchandizing; and when he came to be Governor of *Athens*, he rendred the Employment honourable there. We must distinguish here, as formerly in the Remarks, that Merchandizing in small things was despised as vicious, because ordinarily attended with Lies: for as *Cicero* says,

A.

A Merchant who sells by retail, gains but little except he lie a great deal : but great Trade, or the Commerce of great Merchants who did traffick by Sea, was very honourable, because of the Commodities which it furnished, and that it was more agreeable to Truth and Justice ; and therefore *Hesiod* did not think it unbecoming him to give Precepts concerning the same to his Brother *Perfa*, in his Poem of Works and Days.

2. It is observed, that People lov'd a different Government according to the Places which they did inhabit. Those who dwell in Mountainous Countries are usually the greatest Lovers of Liberty, and therefore it is that they affect a popular Government. Those who live in Plain and Open Countries, being commonly more rich and polite, are by consequence ambitious, and incline to an Oligarchy, because they hope to be of the Number of those who govern : And those who inhabit the Sea-Coasts, partaking of the Humours both of the one and the other, are for a Government which is a Mixture of Democracy and Oligarchy ; that is to say, that the People may have the Liberty of Suffrage, but the Power of Judging and Determining rests in a small Number.

3. It is observ'd, that *Draco* was the first of the Greeks who condemned Adulterers to Death : And to inspire Men with the greater Horror of Murder, he would have inanimate Things brought to Trial if they kill'd any one ; and thus a Statue which had fallen upon a certain Person, was banished.

4. At first the Name of *Parasite* was venerable and sacred, for it did properly signify a Guest at Sacrifices ; and that in *Greece* there were Men who were particularly honoured with that Title, and were much the same with the *Epulones* amongst the Romans, but that now it is not so.

In the Remarks on *Publicola's* Life, we read that Funeral Orations did not commence in *Greece* till after the Battel of *Marathon*, which did not happen till 16 Years after the Death of *Brutus*. Before that Time, the Greeks did honour the Funerals of great Men with publick Plays and Duels, but did not make any Elogies for them in publick. The Honour of the Invention of Funeral Orations, is due to the Romans ; but the Greeks had this Advantage, that they observ'd them with more Equity and Justice ; for in *Greece* they did not honour any with publick Elogies, but those who died fighting for their Country : Whereas the Romans allowed

ed the same to all Great Men who had serv'd their Country in any manner whatever, as judging that all Vertues deserv'd that Recompence. This is sufficient to give you a Taste, by which you may judg of this Work ; but the little Chronology which is prefixt thereunto does yet commend it further, as illustrating abundance of Difficulties, and shewing in what Order those Lives are to be read.

Breves Observationes de Actibus Humanis & Passionibus Animæ: i. e. *Brief Observations upon Humane Actions, and the Passions of the Soul; as also upon Vertue and Vice in general.* By Gummar Huygens, D. D. At Liege, Octavo, 1694.

THose who teach Moral Philosophy in the Schools, don't much trouble themselves about any thing further than to form the Spirits of Youth ; for most of them content themselves with explaining to them the Nature of Actions and Passions which are proper to Man, and afterwards give them some Idea of Vertues and Vice, without concerning themselves what Improvement their Scholars make of all their Speculations, as thinking it sufficient if they make them Learned. But the chief thing is to influence and form the Heart, and teach them to live as becomes them in every Condition ; to govern their Passions at all times, keep aloof from Vice as much as is possible, and apply themselves wholly to the Study of Vertue. Dr. *Huygens* hath observ'd this so well, that he hath turn'd his Morality wholly towards the practical Part, and does not touch upon the Subjects which are ordinarily treated of in Moral Philosophy ; but to make us observe in every step, that we are oblig'd to put them in execution during the whole Course of our Life.

I. The first Thing propos'd in Moral Philosophy, is the Ultimate End, and Chief Happiness of Man : We must then, says our Author, bethink our selves forthwith of our Ultimate End, and speedily enquire after the Means which may conduct us thither safely ; and we must keep on constantly, without halting by the Way. The

Means by which we may arrive at the same, must be carefully followed ; but we must not rest or fix upon them too much, they are good for Use but not for Enjoyment. We ought not to rest satisfied with any thing but our Ultimate End, where we may find perfect Pleasure. Whence we are taught to conclude, that it is the Height of Folly to cleave close to the Creature, the Enjoyment of which can never satisfy us fully ; and that we ought not to long after any thing but God, nor to act but with an Eye to his Glory, seeing to adhere unto God is the Fulness of all Good, and our Heart ought to be there where our Treasure is.

2. We call properly an humane or voluntary Action every thing which we do, with reference to an End well-known unto us : But that voluntary Action is direct, when it terminates on a thing which is precisely sought after for it self ; but it is indirect, when it relates immediately not to the thing which happens, but to that which produces it. Upon which it is observed, that a Humane Action in order to its being good, ought directly to aim at what is good, and that it is often evil without proposing any thing that is morally bad ; because it tends to that which operates, or may operate that Evil. He shows us moreover, that those sort of Actions have not all the same degree of Malignity, to the end that every one may take heed and observe themselves as they ought when they act.

3. A voluntary Action does necessarily suppose that one is free ; that is to say, that they are determin'd by themselves to act, or that we stand in need of nothing else to determine us but our own Reason which we consult, and whose Light we follow in our Actions ; and this *Liberty* he calls *essential*. Our Author moreover besides this, mentions a *Liberty of Indifference*, which puts the Creature in a Condition to determine it self either to act or not : It being well understood, says he, that in the Manner of Acting, the Will does always determine it self according to the Light of the Reason or Understanding. Then he examines when, and how Ignorance, whether of Matter of Fact or Right, renders an Action involuntary, or makes it be so esteem'd. From thence he passes to the Circumstances of an humane or voluntary Action ; and shows, that we must take great heed thereunto, because they are sometimes a Part of the Object of our Will ; and that when they are only Moral Accidents of a Moral Action, they do thereunto add certain

certain Characters of Honesty or Infamy which cannot but be of great Consequence.

To this he adds Reflections upon the Motives of the Will. It is certain that the Will seeks after no other thing than that which is good, when the Understanding hath represented the same unto it, and that it keeps at a distance from the Evil which the same Understanding hath discovered unto it: But Mr. *Huygens* is of Opinion, that on certain Occasions the Understanding may say, after a long and mature Examination, that we must do this or that, without the Will's being mov'd in the least, because otherwise it should not be free; and that also it can neither act nor move it self on certain Evenements without supernatural Assistance; and at other times it acts without staying for the practical Judgment of the Understanding, as appears from the first Sin of the Angels or Man, which, according to our Author, was not preceded by any erroneous Judgment of the Understanding.

The sensitive Appetite does also move the Will according to the Antient Philosophy, when the Soul reflects upon agreeable Objects; and it may also be sustain'd according to the Modern Philosophy, in saying that the sensitive Appetite is no other than the Soul it self; forasmuch as on occasion of the Motion of the Animal Spirits, Blood, and other Humours which are in the Body to which it is united, it gives Attention to the Objects that present themselves, and according as it finds them good, rejoices in them, desires and seeks after them by a Love of the Reasonable Will. Sometimes also this sensitive Appetite darkens the Understanding, which in that case, having nothing but false and mistaken Ideas, occasions the Will to go astray.

4. The Goodness and Perverseness of an human Action are derived from its Object, because it is never considered without relation to the Object, and that it is there that we have always the first and most direct View. We judg afterwards of this Action by its Circumstances, which do oftentimes change the Species of Goodness and Wickedness, which must be attributed thereunto, or at least render it better or worse. But at the same time when we contemplate a human Action with relation to its Object, to discover whether it be good or bad, according as it terminates at Good or Evil, we must also observe the Person that acts; and to

make a due Judgment of the Goodness or Malice of that Agent, we must observe what End he proposes to himself in acting: because Man having the End in view, sooner than the Means conducing thereunto, we judg better of the Action, to determine whether he be good or bad, by studying the End to which it tends, rather than the Object of the Action, which is only a Mean to accomplish his End. Moreover, a human Action cannot be esteemed good, if it have not a good Object and a good End, if all the Circumstances thereof be not good, and if the Man don't directly set his Mind both upon the Goodness of the Object he seeks, and upon the Goodness of the End for which he acts. And on the contrary, an Action is bad when there is any thing to be said against the Object, the End or the Circumstances: whence he infers, that there is no human Action which in the Rigor can be call'd indifferent, that is to say, which is not morally either good or evil.

5. But as it is oftentimes very difficult to judg aright, whether that which is done at such a time, and in such a place, be lawful or unlawful in all its Circumstances, the *Conscience*, which is nothing else but a sort of Judgment, is not always right and sure. If the Judgment of the Mind be true, the Conscience is right; and if its Decision be certain and uncontrovertible, the Conscience may be said to be sure: But if on the contrary, the Understanding judg falsely, the Conscience is erroneous; and if it found its Judgment only upon some Reason or plausible Authority, the Conscience is called simply *probable* or *scrupulous*, when it is afraid of taking a wrong Course without having however any plausible Reason to fear that it hath done so. Others speak also of a *doubting Conscience*, which our Author opposes, saying, that since a Doubt does necessarily import a suspension of Judgment, there cannot be any such thing as a doubting Conscience, because the Conscience in proper Speech is a Judgment.

That being laid down, he concludes that we sin against Conscience every time we check that Light of the Understanding, which helps us to judg whether a thing be good or bad in all its Circumstances, according to time and place, &c. in such sort that to act against Conscience, is not to be inclin'd to do forbidden things, but to do that by choice and freely which we judg to be forbidden; whence it follows, according to our Author, that the
first

first Motions, how irregular soever they be, are no Sins against Conscience, because Liberty is not concern'd therein. Then he shows us how atrocious those Sins are which be committed against the Conscience, in comparing them with Sins committed directly against the Law: And afterwards examines some particular Cases of Conscience, and resolves not only some Difficulties which concern a scrupulous Conscience, but those which relate either to an erroneous or doubting Conscience.

6. His following Chapter treats of a probable Conscience, which hath no other Foundation but some Reason or plausible Authority; or, to explain himself in the Terms of the Modern Casuists, which relies upon one Authority only, or upon one Reason which hath some Weight: And the same Casuists say that this probable Conscience is sufficiently authorized, when it embraces that Opinion, which hath a Man of Learning and Probity for its Author, who hath maturely examin'd the thing, and weighed the Reasons *Pro* and *Con*. Whence it appears, as our Author observes, that if this Probability be the Foundation or Rule of Manners, there would be nothing so different nor unconstant as the Morals of the Modern Casuists; seeing there's no Opinion wherein Conscience is interest'd, which is not authorized by the Suffrage of one Doctor at least, who shall pass for an able and honest Man: and if it be so, Cardinal *Bona* had reason to say that the Commandments of God and the Church cannot subsist, but so far as it pleases the Casuists, or the new Directors of a probable Conscience: So that there needs no more but a Casuist's approving of a thing to make the Practice thereof lawful. And what is it that those Doctors will not do? for we can show that they have contradicted all the Precepts of the Divine Law; and that not one Article thereof can subsist if it be referr'd to their Judgment. But those Particulars carry me too far, so that I refer the Reader to the List of the Casuists probable Opinions, by *Sinnichius Fagnanus*, *Gonet*, *Vincent Contensonius*, &c. to which may be added the 110 Propositions which were condemned at *Rome*, partly by *Alexander the VIIth*, and partly by *Innocent XI*.

He pursues this Matter throughout Chapter XIV, and does forthwith show the strange and dangerous Consequences of that Probability in Matters of Conscience and Morals. 1. That there's no more to do but to get one of those new Doctors, who

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is esteemed a Man of Learning and Probity, to authorize whatever he has a mind to establish against all Laws Divine and Human, which is sufficient to give it a Vogue, and secure the Consciences of those, who living according to his Maxims, shall violate all that is sacred in Religion, and profitable in a civil Life. 2. Every one of those Doctors shall have Power at least to break the Laws, restrain them, and make of them what he will, which in process of time will annihilate them, as has been already known. 3. In time to come it will be said, that we are not obliged to follow the Truth in Morals, seeing simple Probability is a sufficient Rule of Manners. 4. And from thence it follows also, that the Defenders of Probability do arrogate a Power to themselves, which raises them above Princes and Bishops, nay above God himself. 5. Moreover, one sole Doctor, which is very absurd, shall ballance all the Men of Learning and Probity in the World, nay, and even carry it against them, if his Opinion in Morals be but embrac'd, seeing he alone hath sufficient Authority which may serve as a Foundation to a probable Conscience. 6. In fine; if the Doctrine of Probability take place, as Truth shall no more be the Rule of Manners, we may also come in time neither to acknowledge the eternal Law, eternal Wisdom, nor eternal Justice; such are the Consequences of Probability.

Our Author does afterwards confute it by the holy Scripture, which never proposes any thing to us as the Rule of our Conduct, besides the Will of God express'd in his Law; and hence it comes to pass that it calls none blessed, but such as walk in the Law of the Lord. To this he adds a particular Proof taken from an antient Custom of the Jews. St. *Matthew* teaches us, that Christ censured those that practis'd the Doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees, who held that Children might dispense with their relieving the Necessities of their Parents, in telling them that every Gift *which I shall offer to God, shall be for your Profit*; and to show that he did extreamly blame the Doctrine of the Scribes, and the Practice of the People who follow'd that Doctrine, he declar'd to them, that *because of that, both the one and the other shall fall into the Ditch*. Certainly if the Doctrine of Probability had been receiv'd at that time, he had not had one word to say neither against the Antient Doctors, nor against the Antient People, so far would he have been from denouncing such severe Penalties
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against them; for in effect what was there wanting to legitimate the Practice of those who refused necessary Supplies to their Parents, by telling them that what they could have given them, they had already devoted to God, and that in offering the same to God, it would turn to their Profit? I say, what was there wanting to authorize that Practice but simple Probability? Those who taught that Practice were the most famous Doctors of the Law, viz. the Scribes and Pharisees, who were all of that Opinion, in as much as we can gather from the Text, which designs them in general; and besides that, they had received that Doctrine from their Predecessors: for it passes for a Tradition, and Jesus Christ himself seems to say, that they ought to have a Deference for their Opinion, when he says that *those Doctors sat in Moses's Chair*. From all which it appears that they were very learned People, and had a lawful Call to instruct the People; and as to what relates to Manners, they could not but have a very advantageous Opinion of their Probity; for the Pharisees above all Men passed for People of a distinguishing Probity: So that the Scribes and Pharisees approving of this Point of Morality, the People might practise with a good Conscience, and without any hazard, that which so many Casuists, being Men of Learning and Probity, did teach them, if the simple Probability of the Casuists of that Age had then been the Rule of Manners. To which we may add, that the Authority of those antient Doctors should have been chiefly prevalent in a Matter of Fact, which had no direct regard to Holiness, nor the Exercise of Faith, but did only concern the distribution or offering of some Worldly Goods. But notwithstanding all those Considerations, the Doctors who teach the People, and the People who practised according to their Doctrine, were to be cast into the bottomless Pit. Whence we infer, that the Authority of those Doctors does not secure the Peoples Consciences, and that the Probability we have been speaking of, is not the true Foundation of Christian Morality.

7. As to what concerns a scrupulous Conscience, he forthwith enquires after the Causes of Scruples which arise in the Soul, and do many times throw it into Trouble and Anxiety. The Mind, if it be weak, inconstant in its Judgment, or ill inform'd as to things, renders us scrupulous divers ways. The Will is many times a no less fruitful Source of Scruples: for if we trust too much

much to our own Judgment in Matters of Conscience, and despise that of others without Cause ; or if we make too much ado about things which have but very little relation to good Morals ; or if we pretend to be able to save our selves absolutely from all sorts of Sin and Inclination to Evil, those Dispositions render us scrupulous to the highest degree ; and our Constitution, if it be melancholy and timorous, excites in us Passions of Fear and Sadness, and troubles us so strangely, that we find our selves disquieted and exercised with an infinite Number of Scruples of Conscience.

And besides those Sources of Scruples which are within our selves, he proposes to our Consideration several others without us, which excite Scruples in divers Manners. God does sometimes put us in such a Condition that we find our Consciences alarm'd and disquieted by abundance of Scruples, which he does to render us more circumspect throughout the rest of our Life, and to teach us to humble our selves in the Sense of our Infirmary, and to have recourse to his Grace for Ability to surmount all Temptations in time to come. The Devil doth all that he can on his part to hinder our Piety, and traverse the Work of our Salvation by a thousand Scruples, which depress our Spirits, or tend to drive us to Despair : He inflames the Blood in our Bodies, and acts our Spirits with Vehemence, to raise such Passions in our Souls, as may lead us into dangerous Scruples. Conversation with People of a timorous Conscience, without any plausible Ground to fear such or such a Sin, is also one of the external Causes of our Scruples. To which may be added at last, that Objects don't contribute a little to render us scrupulous, *viz.* when they are so obscure either as to Matter of Fact or Right, that we have great Difficulty to know how to behave our selves in relation to them.

By the same Measures that the Sources of Scruples of Conscience are discovered, the Remedies to prevent them or guard us against them, are also made known : and it is made appear throughout, that we can do nothing without the Assistance of God ; and in the mean time we ought not to neglect the Advice of the Sage Directors of Conscience, who assist us to regulate our Conduct according to the Condition in which we are.

II. Hitherto our Author has observ'd the Actions of the Will; but afterward he insists upon the Consideration of the Passions of the Soul.

1. Dr. *Huygens* agrees with the New Philosophers, that what we call properly a *Passion of the Soul*, is a certain Impression made in the Soul by the immediate Action of the Animal Spirits, which circulate with the Blood in our Bodies. In the mean time, he is perswaded that to speak exactly, there are no other but the sole Acts of the reasonable Will that the Soul it self doth immediately produce, which deserve the Name of Love, Desire, Joy, &c. the Names that are ordinarily given to the Passions of the Soul, and do only agree to them; because they solícite, if we may so speak, or encline the Soul to reasonable Acts, which are justly called Love, Desire, Joy, &c. And further; Does it not happen every Day that the Passions of the Soul draw the Will to reasonable Acts, which correspond with them? for many times we find the Motions of an Irregular Passion, as sensual Pleasure for Example, Sadness, &c. to which the Soul gives no Consent.

2. As to what remains, seeing we are subject to the Irregularity of Passions in the State of Corrupt Nature, our Author shows by what Means we may guard against the Disorder and deadly Consequences of Passions in the whole Course of our Lives. After which he makes Judicious Observations upon each Passion in particular.

III. The Six last Chapters contain general Reflections upon Vertues and Vices.

1. What is commonly taught in the Schools, that Vertue consists in Mediocrity, or as others say, in a certain Middle which appears equally distant from Excess and Defect, does not always hold true: for we cannot place the Love which we have for God, nor the Hope, nor the Confidence that we have in him, betwixt the two Extrems, it being impossible either to love, or to trust in God too much. In the mean time, if we consider him who acts vertuously, and the Diversity of his Circumstances, then when he does act, we may find a Mids to all that he does which is vertuous. As for Example; A Man of a weak Constitution, or who is already spent by some Distemper, may sin by an Excess of Love towards God, if his too great Fervor, or too much inflam'd Zeal go on to ruine his Health,

or do so much exhaust his Spirits as to deprive him of the Use of Reason. A Man may also be guilty of a vicious Excess by reiterating Acts of Devotion or Charity for so long together, as to neglect all Care of his Life, and become a Murderer of himself: So that in relation to the Agent, and the Time that he spends in the Practice of Vertue, we must confess that Vertue whatsoever it be requires a Mids.

2. Vicious Excesses are much more frequent in the External Action than Internal, according to our Author's Remark; who maintains that People are oftner guilty of an Excess in external Abstinence, than of an Excess of Love of that Abstinence; and that we are more often faulty in a too great Frequency of Acts of external Penance, than by a too great Love for Penance.

3. To be truly vertuous, we must possess Vertue to the highest degree of Perfection that's possible, and give it all imaginable Extent in its Exercise: and it is by this moreover, that People are confirm'd in the Exercise of Vertue. But to arrive happily at this State of Perfection and Stability, we must never disunite Vertues, for they support and maintain one another. However, he would have us to observe that some are of greater consequence than others, and advises us how we may acquire and preserve them.

4. That being done, he endeavours to inspire us with a Horror of Vice; by showing us, that all Vice is contrary to Nature, not only because it choaks Reason and the Law of Nature, but chiefly because it has a Tendency to destroy the Natural Inclination which we have for the Sovereign Good. Whence he concludes, that we ought to study how to shun Vice by all the Ways which he sets down here; *for there is no Peace to the Wicked*, God himself having said so.

La Methode d' Etudier & d' Enseigner : i. e. The Method how to study and teach Profane History in a Christian and solid Manner, with relation to the Christian Religion, and the Holy Scriptures. By the Reverend Father Louis Thomassin, Priest of the Oratory ; in Octavo, Two Vol. At Paris, 1694.

Historians, who are as the Ministers of Providence, and preserve the Memory of what happens in the Government of the Universe, furnish more ample Subjects of Reflection for the Advantage of the Christian Religion upon what comes to pass from Age to Age, than Poets, Orators or Philosophers. Father *Thomassin*, who is much admir'd for his other Works, wherein he discovers a compleat Knowledg in all that concerns the Doctrine or Discipline of the Church, teaches us in this Work how to apply unto the Church the Events which are to be found in the Histories of all Nations.

He begins with an Abridgment of the four Great Monarchies, and justifies their principal *Epocha's* according to the Chronology of the Hebrew Text ; but before he comes to describe the Establishment of the Kingdom of the *Assyrians*, he draws a rough Draught of the Way how the first Men liv'd before the Deluge ; and to shew that they had some Tincture of Learning and Sciences, he observes that *Lot's* Children div'd into the Secrets of Astronomy, and wrote them upon two Columns, one of Brick, which might be proof against Fire, and the other of Stone, which might be proof against Floods. Whence he infers that seeing they knew how to write, they would not fail to make use of it ; and that the Honour of that Invention is due to them, though others who liv'd a long time since them, have boasted of it since. This he confirms by what *St. Jude* says of *Enoch's* Book, which is different from that which we have under his Name.

He infers from thence, that *Noah*, who liv'd with *Enoch*, could not be ignorant of Letters ; that they were preserv'd with him in the Ark, and were conveyed by him to Posterity.

Our Author coming at length to the Deluge, observes, that the Year in which it happened is exactly describ'd in the 7th Chapter of *Genesis*; that it was then God permitted *Noah* and his Children to eat Flesh; and that Mankind being exceedingly multiplied about 100 Years after, *Noah's* Posterity came down into the Valley of *Shinar*, and there formed the Design of building the City and Tower of *Babylon*.

Father *Thomasin* does not however believe, that this was the first Establishment of the Babylonian Empire, because it requires a longer time to form Great Empires: and he is of opinion, that it was only the Establishment of *Nimrod's* Kingdom at *Babylon*, capital City of the Earth, and always Enemy to the City of God.

He fixes the first Observations which the Babylonians made on the Stars, in that Period, viz. in 1771. which was only about 14 Years after the Deluge. The Demonstration of this *Epocha* depends upon that which *Simplicius* ordered to be told to *Porphyry*, that after *Alexander* had taken *Babylon*, *Callisthenes* did send into *Greece*, at *Aristotle's* Desire, the Observations which the Chaldeans had made during 1903 Years, which two Numbers came just to the time in which *Alexander* took *Babylon*.

This Learned Author is perswaded, that when *Nimrod* laid the first Foundation of Royalty at *Babylon*, Religion had suffered no great Alteration; and that *Noah* who liv'd above 200 Years after, preserv'd the Tradition of the Patriarchs, with whom he had conversed for divers Ages before the Deluge.

Noah did also see two other Kingdoms established, viz. that of *Egypt* in 1816. whither *Cham*, or *Mizraim* his Son, conducted some Colonies; and that of the Sicionians in the *Peloponnesus* in 1915, whereof *Egialeus* was the first King.

The People of God who descended from *Heber* and *Peleg*, did not as yet make any separate State, but mixt with the Chaldeans in the Province of *Babylon*. *Abraham*, who was the Tenth from *Noah*, was born in 2008. and 75 Years after receiv'd Orders from God to depart from *Ur* of the Chaldees, where *Terah* his Father had been infected with Idolatry.

After the Death of *Terah* in *Mesopotamia*, *Abraham* had a second Call from God into *Palestine*; where although he did not take the Title of King, he acquir'd a greater Power than those who assum'd it, seeing, with the People of his own Household, he defeated four
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of them, amongst whom the Scripture names the King of *Shinar*, that is to say, *Babylon*, which confirms what we have already supposed, that the Empire of the *Assyrians* was not then established.

In 2148, *Inachus* founded the Kingdom of *Argos*. It was in his time that *Amasis* King of *Egypt* made War with the Shepherds, treated with them, and capitulated with them to leave the Country to the Number of 240000. They travers'd the Wilderness, descended into the Country which was afterwards call'd *Judea*, and there they built the City of *Jerusalem*.

Abraham, *Isaac* and *Jacob* spent part of their time in *Palestine*, and part in *Egypt*, where *Joseph* governed with an absolute Power to the day of his Death, which happend *Anno Mundi* 2369.

In 2448, *Cecrops* the Egyptian founded the Kingdom of *Athens*.

In 2466, the *Arabians* vanquish'd the *Caldeans*, and reigned at *Babylon*. *Damestes* and *Amenophis* Kings of *Egypt*, persecuted the *Israelites*, whom *Moses* delivered from Oppression in 2513, and fulfilled the Promise which was made 430 Years before unto *Abraham*.

In 2553, *Sesostris* King of *Egypt*, render'd himself Master of the Isle of *Cyprus*, and the Country of the *Assyrians*, and at his Return banish'd *Danaus* his Brother, because of his Injustice: *Danaus* retir'd into *Greece*, where he seized the City of *Argos*. His fifty Daughters whom he left in *Egypt*, did there marry the fifty Sons of *Sesostris*, whom the Greeks call *Egyptus*. *Moses* died that same Year, without having put the *Israelites* in Possession of the promis'd Land.

In 2682, *Belus* the Assyrian put an end to the Monarchy of the *Arabians*, and made himself Master of *Babylon*. *Ninus* his Son began the Universal Monarchy of the *Assyrians*, which continued 520 Years, until that *Arbaces*, Governour of *Media*, revolted against *Sardanapalus*, and laid Siege before *Nineve*, where that cowardly and sensual Prince burnt himself, with his Concubines and Treasures.

Out of the Ruines of that Empire were form'd three Kingdoms, viz. those of the *Medes*, *Babylonians* and *Assyrians*. *Ninus* the younger, whom the Scripture calls *Tiglath Pileser*, was succeeded by his Son *Salmanassar*, who besieged *Samaria*, and transported the ten Tribes into *Media*.

Senacherib, Son to *Salmanassar*, invested *Jerusalem*; but the Prophet *Isaiah* comforted King *Hezekiah*, assuring him that *Senacherib* should be forc'd to quit the Siege. In effect *Tirhakah*, King of *Ethiopia*, having come to their Relief, *Senacherib* returned to *Nineve*, where he was slain in a Temple by *Adramelech*, and *Sarazer* his two Sons.

In 3296, *Dejoces* King of the *Medes* built the City of *Ecbatane*.

In 3369, *Phraortes* his Son laid Siege to *Nineve*, and was killed there.

In 3378, *Nabopolassar*, who in the Greek Version of *Tobit* is called *Nabuchadnosor*, took *Nineveh*.

In 3397, *Nabuchadnosor* the younger reigned with *Nabopolassar* his Father, and made himself Master of all *Egypt*. The Year following he seized *Jebojachin* King of *Judah*, and sent him to *Babylon* with a great number of young Men, amongst whom was the Prophet *Daniel*.

In 3401, he had the Vision or Dream composed of different Metals, for interpreting of which *Daniel* was rewarded with the Government of *Chaldea*.

In 3405, he besieged *Jerusalem*, took King *Jechonias* at Discretion, and sent him to *Babylon* with a great number of Prisoners, among whom were *Mordecai* and the Prophet *Ezekiel*.

In 3414, *Nebuchadnezzar* besieged *Jerusalem* afresh, and it was relieved by *Vafres* King of *Egypt*. In 3415, he besieged it again, and the Year following took it by Storm, put out King *Zedekiah's* Eyes, and sent him in Fetters to *Babylon* after he had slain his Children before his Face, which was the Accomplishment of *Jeremy's* Predictions in *Jerusalem*, and *Ezekiel's* in *Babylon*: After this he destroyed *Solomon's* Temple, which was built 480 Years before; and so the Kingdom of *Judah* was destroyed 134 Years after that of *Israel*.

Nebuchadnezzar after having subdued the *Tyrians*, *Sidonians*, *Moabites*, and other Nations, returned to *Babylon*, where he had the Dream of the mysterious Tree, which a Voice from Heaven ordered to be cut down. The Chaldeans could not tell him the Interpretation thereof, but *Daniel* did. He afterwards built a new *Babylon*, which he join'd to the old, and encompassed them both with that famous Brick Wall upon which he planted Gardens that hung in the Air.

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That same Year having having finished this great Work, *Nebuchadnezzar* became vain-glorious thereof, and as a Punishment for the same lost the use of his Reason, and remained seven Years amongst Beasts.

In 3442, he came to himself, acknowledg'd the Sovereign Power of the most High who had thus punish'd him, and publish'd an Edict commanding his Subjects to worship him.

Evil Merodach his Son succeeded, and was kill'd by *Neriglissar* his Sister's Husband, in 3444.

In 3448, *Labo Sordach* succeeded *Neriglissar* his Father, and reigned only 9 Months; for having killed the Son of Prince *Gobrias* at a hunting, that gave him occasion to deliver himself up to the *Medes*, perish'd himself the Year following, and left his Dominions to *Belteshazzar*, Son to *Evil Merodach*: he finish'd the Walls of *Babylon* along the *Euphrates*, which *Nebuchadnezzar* had only begun.

In 3456, *Cresus* General of the Babylonian and Confederate Armies, was defeated by *Cyrus*, and condemned to be burnt, but was not executed. *Cyrus*, after many other Expeditions, besieged *Babylon*, and took it on a Festival Day. *Belteshazzar* was then treating the Lords of his Court, and caused the Vessels of the Temple of *Jerusalem*, which his Father had taken, to be brought in to be used at the Banquet; and during this Treat, a miraculous Hand wrote his Condemnation upon the Wall of the Banqueting-House, which none but *Daniel* knew how to interpret.

Belteshazzar was kill'd that same Night by *Gobrias* his Souldiers, and so the Babylonian Empire was destroy'd in 3446, and transferred to the *Medes* and *Persians*.

The Year following, which was the 70th of the Captivity, *Daniel* pray'd for his Brethren in Captivity, and had the Revelation of their Deliverance.

In 3468, *Cyrus* was sole Monarch of the East, protested that he held his Dominions from the Hand of the true God, sent the Jews back to *Palestine*, and permitted them to rebuild their Temple there.

Here our Author makes this Reflection, that never were the two Cities, viz. that of *Babylon* and that of God, so strangely confounded, as toward the latter end of this Monarchy, from
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the Death of *Sardanapalus* to the Empire of *Cyrus*: *Judea* was laid waste, and the Temple demolish'd; but its Desolation was its Conversion, and the Sanctification of many of its Enemies.

Cyrus being dead in 3475, *Cambyfes* his Son succeeded, but had nothing of his Father's Clemency nor Wisdom: while he made War upon *Egypt*, *Pythagoras* was taken there by his Souldiers and carried to *Babylon*, where he learned the Sciences of the *Caldeans*; and hence comes the Agreement that there is to be found betwixt his Doctrine and that of the Scriptures.

In 3482, one of the *Magi*, who had possess'd himself of the Throne of *Persia*, interrupted the rebuilding of the Temple of *Jerusalem*, which delay'd its being finished for six Years after.

In 3550, *Nehemiah* obtain'd the Government of *Judea* from *Artaxerxes*, with Power to rebuild the Walls of the holy City.

In 3648, *Alexander*, Son to *Philip* of *Macedon*, was born; and that same day the Temple of *Ephesus* was burnt, *Plato* died about eight Years after.

In 3672, *Alexander* gain'd a bloody Battel over *Darius*, went into *Judea*, enter'd *Jerusalem*, sacrificed in the Temple, and permitted the Jews to live according to their own Laws. Two Years after, having conquered abundance of Provinces in the East, he saw himself Master of the Empire, which the *Babylonians*, *Assyrians*, *Medes* and *Persians* had successively enjoy'd. He was taken out of the World in the 33d Year of his Age, and in the midst of his Victories: His Dominions being divided amongst his Captains.

In 3727, or thereabouts, *Ptolomy Philadelphes* caused the Scriptures to be translated into Greek, and bought *Aristotle's* Library.

In 3778, *Ptolomee*, surnamed *Philopater*, began to persecute the Jews, and died in 3800. *Ptolomee Epiphanes* his Son succeeded, and had great Wars with *Antiochus* King of *Syria*, and *Philip* King of *Macedonia*, who had leagued together to share his Dominions.

Antiochus seized *Judea*, and in 3810 made great Presents to the Temple of *Jerusalem*. In 3813, he was vanquished by the Romans at the *Thermopile*, and retired into *Asia*, where the two *Scipio's* made War upon him a long time. *Selencus Philopater* his eldest Son succeeded him.

In 3829, *Antiochus*, youngest Son to *Antiochus* the Great, returning from *Rome*, where he had been a long time kept as an Hostage

Hostage, took Possession of the Kingdom which was vacant by the Death of his Brother *Selencus*.

Jason being wearied at the too long Life of *Onias* the third, his Brother, the High-Priest of the Jews, offered great Sums to King *Antiochus* if he would give him the Office. *Menelaus*, whom he employ'd to carry the Money, gave 300 Talents more, and took the Office himself, and excluded *Jason*.

In 3834, *Antiochus*, on his return from *Egypt*, enter'd *Jerusalem*, and plundered the Temple. In 3837, he publish'd an Edict, ordering all his Subjects to follow the Pagan Religion; and in Execution thereof, the Temple was profaned, the holy Books burnt, and the seven Brethren, the *Maccabees*, put to Death at *Antioch* by divers sorts of Torments.

In 3875, *Hircanus* ruin'd the Temple of *Gerizim* 200 Years after it had been built by *Sanballat*: He was High-Priest, and in a manner Sovereign of the Jews, acknowledging no Dependance on the Macedonian Kings of *Syria*. He died in 3898, after which the precious Stones in the High-Priest's Garments ceased to cast that Light which they us'd to do sometimes, and were instead of an Oracle.

Judas, or *Aristobulus*, the eldest of his Sons, succeeded him, and was the first who assumed the Crown. He associated *Antiochus* his Brother with him in the Kingdom, and put the three other in Prison.

After his Death *Salome* his Wife set the Crown upon the Head of *Alexander Jannicus*, the eldest of the three Brothers. He died in 3926. *Alexandra* his Wife gave the Pontificat to *Hircanus*, the eldest of his Sons, and governed during nine Years.

She being dead, *Aristobulus* debauch'd a part of *Hircanus*'s Subjects, and constrain'd him to resign the Kingdom and the High-Priesthood to him by a Treaty.

In 3940, *Pompey* caus'd *Aristobulus* to be arrested, and laid Siege to *Jerusalem*, *Hircanus*'s Faction opening the Gates to him: *Aristobulus* defended himself in the Temple, where 12000 Jews were killed. *Pompey* order'd it to be purified next day, and Sacrifices to be offer'd there as formerly. He restor'd the High-Priesthood to *Hircanus* with the Quality of King, impos'd a Tribute upon the Jews, and carried *Aristobulus* to *Rome*, to be an Ornament for his Triumph.

In 3956, *Julius Caesar* was created *Dictator*, won the Battel of *Pharsalia* against *Pompey*, who was kill'd in *Egypt*, whither he fled. In 3960, *Caesar* himself was kill'd in the Senate.

In 3973, the Battel of *Actium* assur'd the Empire to *Augustus*. Having given Peace to the Universe, in 4000 he publish'd an Edict commanding his Subjects to be numbered; and in this Year our Saviour was born at *Bethlehem*.

The Enumeration of these Epocha's, which serve as a Foundation for the Reflections which Father *Thomasin* is to make in the Sequel of his Work, ends at the 11th Chapter of the first Book of the first Tome. The rest of the Chapters of that Book are spent in the Description of the State of Mankind at the beginning, after the Deluge, the Rise and Progress of Monarchies and Empires, the Invention of Arts necessary for Society, the Voyages and Travels of great Men, who travell'd the World to banish Barbarity and Violence thence, and establish Justice and good Laws. The rest we refer to another time.

A Letter from Amsterdam, containing a Dissertation upon an antient Shekel of the Sanctuary.

I Was very glad to find in a late Book of Monsieur *Morins*, entitled, *De Lingua Primæva*, the Cut of a Shekel of *David*; but when I had examin'd it, I found some Defects in it: I had perhaps never observ'd it, had I not seen in *France* another Shekel very different from this, and which is owned by all the Learned to be of an undoubted Antiquity. It has on the Face *Aaron's* Rod, with a Royal Crown to the right, and the Golden Vessel wherein the first Manna was preserv'd, to the left, with a \beth to the right also, and a ψ to the left, signifying in the Name, that is, in the Name of God. In the Reverse there is a Cup of Deliverance or Salvation, with three Nofegays, or Bundles of the First-fruits, and the Crown of the High-Priest covered with Gold to the right, with the same \beth , and the Horn wherein the sacred Oil was preserved, with a ψ to the left, as in the Face. The

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words of the first Face are בארצו ציון בבית המקדש שקל דוד כאשר פלם, that is to say, *The Shekel of David as he has exactly weighed it in the Treasury of Sion, in the House of the Sanctuary*; and those of the Reverse, בירושלם יהוה שמר מלך גביר, that is, *Jehova defending Israel, the mighty King in Jerusalem*. All this may be read as easily as if the Shekel had been newly coin'd.

In the Shekel described by Monsieur Morin, there is under the Royal Crown a ך instead of a כ, and the words say, כשאר בלם בארצו ציון בבית המקדש שקל דוד, *Shekel of David hid or left in the Treasury of Sion, in the House of the Sanctuary*; and in the Reverse ישראל מלך בבור בירושלם יהוה שמר, that is, *Jehova keeping Israel from falling into the Pit in Jerusalem*. The כ and the ש are very well expressed.

The words of the first Shekel, as you may see, are very natural; and conformable to the Intention of King David; so that the Sense is clear and easy, which cannot be said of this of Monsieur Morin, and therefore I suspect it is only a Counterfeit of the true Shekel that I have quoted; and as to the Difference that is between them, it may have happened thus: The word כאשר *Caascher*, which signifies *as*, was not perhaps well expressed in the Medal from which this Copy was taken; and it's like enough that the Copist has taken the Letter כ a little defaced for a ך Nun, and then he thought that this word was to be read in *Niphal*; and therefore they have put *Schaar* instead of *Ascher* by a Transposition of the Letter נ, to find out the Sense they imagined the Inscription was to have. And so they have written נהאר *Nasar*, which signifies *hidden*, and formed from the Verb שאר *Schaar* in *Niphal*.

They are also fallen into another Mistake in the next following word, and it's likely that they could not read the Letter, being perhaps half worn out. There was in the Original פלם *Pilles* in *Pihel*, which signifies *weighed exactly*, and they have read בלם *balas*, which signifies *left*, taking the Letter פ *Pe* for a כ *Beth*. Those two Mistakes have occasioned this Explanation of the words of the first Face, *Shekel of David hid, or left in the Treasury of Sion*, which is not natural at all; but in reading *Caascher Pilles*, *Shekel of David as he weighed it exactly in the Treasury of Sion*, we find a noble and natural Sense, to which doubtless we must adhere.

In this Reverse of the Shekel of Monsieur *Morin*, one may distinctly read מלך, *Melech King*; but he renders it, *from falling*, or that it does *not* fall, taking the מ *Mem* for a negative Particle, and לך *Lech* for the Verb *Jalach*, which signifies *to go or to fall*. The next Word ought to be read *gibbor*, mighty; but he reads *bebor*, *in the Pit*, taking the *Gimel* for a *Beth*; which must be imputed to the Inscription's being worn out, and defaced by Time. That Alteration of the Letters has caused this forc'd Explanation, *Jehovah keeping Israel from falling or going into the Pit in Jerusalem*: Which last words are very little agreeable to the *Idea* of *Jehovah*, *keeping or defending* Israel; but if we read *Mighty King in Jerusalem*, after *Jehovah defending* Israel, we have a natural Explanation of the Meaning of the Prince who caused that Shekel to be coined, as it will appear to any who will consider the very Words themselves.

I am still confirmed in my Thoughts, by reading over again the Words of the first Face, explained by Monsieur *Morin*; *Shekel of David hid left in the Treasure of Sion*: For these terms *hid and left*, relate to a future thing, and denote what was to be the Occasion of the Shekel. Now those that have the least acquaintance with Medals, know very well that the Inscriptions relate only to present things, and not to future, which are uncertain; and therefore 'tis plain, that both this, and that of the Reverse are false, and transposed, as I have shown. This Reason has so much puzzled Mr. *Morin* himself, that he is forced to own it in the 308th Page of his Book; *Non capio*, says he, *quo modo Numismati in Thesauro Templi Hierosolimitani reperto insculptalis inscriptio potuerit. De his omnibus Lector judicet.*

The first Shekel I have spoken of, weighs about three Crowns and a half, and belongs to Monsieur *Ranchin* of *Monpelier*. I don't know the Weight of that of Monsieur *Morin*, nor from whence he had it; but both of them are rare and curious Pieces, and were not coined for current Money, as the other Shekels were, but rather as Medals: and if they are of *David's* time, they must be of about two thousand and seven hundred Years standing. The common current silver Shekels of the Sanctuary, were worth about two Shillings and six Pence of English Money, &c.

The Merchant's Magazine ; or, Tradesman's Treasury :

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*London, Printed for Chr. Coningsby at the Golden Turk's-Head
in Fleet-street, Quarto, 1695.*

THIS Book it's true has a very long Title, which may perhaps create a Prejudice in some unthinking People against it : but whoever considers the great Variety of Matters therein contained, will easily be convinc'd that the Author could not well make it shorter, especially having a design to express the Contents in the Title Page, that the Reader might see at first view whether there be any thing therein that may fit his purpose.

It's needless for us to insist on the Usefulness of the Work, or spend many words to give you an Idea of it, the Ingenious Author having already perform'd that in his Title Page : Only this we shall

shall venture to say, that though it be with many Books, as it is with Persons who have a plump Countenance and a consumptive Body, the Diligent Peruser will not find this Book to be such; but on the contrary, that the Author doth faithfully perform what his Title promises, and that in the most rational, plain, and compendious Manner of any that we have hitherto seen upon the Subject. Nor can we forbear giving this Judgment of the Work, That it deserves Encouragement from the Publick, as being calculated for the Improvement of Trade and Commerce, to which our English Nation is so much indebted for their Fame and Grandeur, and that great Figure which they make in the World. And seeing the general Current of Education amongst the midling Sort of People, and not a few of the Gentry, does in our days run towards Trade and Merchandize, we cannot but conceive that this Book, if once known, will meet with a general Acceptation by all Men of business; who though they may perhaps think that they don't stand much in need of it themselves, yet must certainly be convinc'd of its Usefulness on many occasions to Men of the greatest Experience; and that it is absolutely needful for their Children and Servants, if they design to imploy them in Trade or Commerce, or have occasion to travel. And how much Labour it may save to School-masters, and Toil and Vexation to Scholars, those who are conversant in such Affairs, will be better able to judg than we are to express.

The

The Pretensions of the most Christian King to the Dominions and Territories of the most Serene Confederates, on the one side; and on the other, the Claims of the most Serene Confederates to France, and the Conquered Countries, truly stated; with exact Enquires into the Rights of every one in particular. From the French Original. Affording great light into the present Differences of Europe; and proper to be bound up with the Historical and Political Mercury.

London, Quarto, Printed for Henry Rhodes at the Star the Corner of Bride-lane, Fleet-street, 1695.

AN active Age being always inquisitive, the Author of this Treatise hath certainly provided a grateful Entertainment for the Appetites of the Curious: For this being a time of War, and Rumours of War, thinking Men don't satisfy themselves merely with an Account of the Successes or Losses of either Party, but enquire into the Pretensions of each, and the Merits of the Cause: and it must certainly add to the Courage of the Soldiery in Fighting, and the Willingness of the Subject in Contributing, when they are convinc'd that they have Justice on their side.

And for such as have a mind to be inform'd which Party have the best Pretensions, this Book may be of extraordinary use: The Claims being fairly stated, and judiciously argued on both Sides; so that it must needs be thought worthy of a place in any Gentleman's Closet, and will certainly recommend it self to the Perusal of every curious Person. And we dare promise the judicious and attentive Reader, that he will think himself sufficiently rewarded for his Pains and Expence. For here he will find the French King's Pretensions not only examin'd in general, but in every particular, viz. unto the Empire, Crown of Castile, Catalonia, Roussillon, Naples and Sicily, Kingdom of Navarr, Majorca, Sardinia, Milan, Luxemburgh, Chini, Flanders, Brabant, Burgundy, Republick of Genoa, Dukedom of Savoy,

Savoy, Piedmont and Nice, Lorrain, Principality of Orange, Avignon and Venessin, Exarchy of Ravenna, the Country of Pentapolis, Dutchies of Deuxponts, Monbelliard, the Cities of Strasburgh and Cazal. Which is perhaps a larger Catalogue of his Pretensions than hath offered it self to every Reader's View. You have here also an Enquiry into the Emperor's Pretensions to *France, Provence, Dauphiny and Languedock*, and the Cities of *Metz, Toul and Verdun*: The King of Spain's Pretensions to *Alsatia, Burgundy, French County and Bretaign*: And England's Pretensions to *Normandy, Poictou, Languedock, Guyenne*, and *France* in general. With an Account of the Contract of Marriage betwixt *Lewis XIV.* and the *Infanta* of *Spain*; and the Act of Renunciation of that Queen to all that might belong or appertain to her as the Daughter and Heiress of their Catholick Majesties, &c.

And we must needs do the Author that Justice as to say, that he hath writ like a Person of Candor and Honour; and is so far from casting the ballance all of one side, that he seems to have endeavoured a Determination according to the Merits of the Cause; and does as much explode the Pretensions of *France* to the *Empire*, as of the *Empire* to *France*; and the Pretensions of *Spain* to *Navarre*, as the Pretensions of *France* to *Catalonia*, &c. However, on the whole he makes the Injustice of the present War on the French King's part very apparent.

You have also in this Treatise a Judicious Discourse of Government in general, and its several Species, with the Author's Opinion which is the best, *viz.* the Lacedemonian, or Government by King and States, which is usually accompanied with Liberty enough, the Nobility enjoying those Privileges which are due to their Birth, the third Estate being no way excluded from Business, and the Presence of a King being necessary on a thousand Occasions, but more particularly in War and Battels.

That the Reader may be the better able to understand the Pretensions here discoursed of, he treats ingeniously of the different sorts of Titles, *viz.* Inheritance, Marriage or Dowry, Donation, Purchase, Reversion, Renunciation, Possession, Conquest and Usurpation; and in treating of Possession, he takes notice of the Injustice

justice of three or four of the last Kings of *France*, who, contrary to the Laws of Nations, that allow an hundred Years Possession as a sufficient Right in the Case of Sovereigns and the Church : have publish'd by their Edicts, that no manner of Prescriptions, even those of an hundred Years, should be of any Validity against them, or the Demesnes of their Crown, nor detain from them such Rights and Territories as depended upon them ; and upon this Foundation *Lewis XIVth* lays Claim to *Strasburgh*, *Luxemburgh*, and the Dutchy of *Deux Ponts*.

The whole is intermixt with entertaining Pieces of History, such as that of the antient *Arragonian Privileges*, called the *La Vajon*, the chief of which were, *That if the King went about to violate their Privileges, they might chuse another ; and if he wronged any Subject, the Nobles being assembled, might confiscate his Revenue till he had satisfied the Party.* Their King was also subject to a Chief Justice called *El Justitia*, and received the Royal Authority from him upon his Knees, swearing to observe the *La Vajon*. But of these Privileges, *Don Pedro*, surnamed *El punal*, obtain'd an Abrogation in an Assembly of the States ; and the Original being delivered into his Hands, he cut it to pieces with his Poniard, and at the same time stabb'd himself into the Arm, saying, that it was but fit that a Law so injurious to Kings should be obliterated by the Blood of a King.

Another of his remarkable Passages is this, That *Edward* King of *England*, laying Claim to the Crown of *France*, in Right of his Grand-mother *Margaret*, Daughter to *Philip* the Fair, the States being a long time in an *Equilibrium* as to his Title, were determin'd against him by the Bishop of *Beauvois*, who rising up of a sudden rehearsed that Passage of the Gospel, *Videte Lilia Agri qui neq; laborant neque nent.* *Ha Messieurs*, said he, *God would this day give us to understand by his Gospel, what your Decision ought to be in this Case.* *The Lilies labour not, neither do they spin ; as much as to say, that the Crown of France, denoted by the Lilies, ought not to encircle the Head of a Woman.*

Books printed beyond Sea.

JOS. Urceoli Patritii Forolivienſis Decisiones Rotæ Florentinæ.
Folio. *Genevæ*, 1694.

Joh. Kunkelii Philoſophia Chemica Experimentis confirmata.
12°. *Amſterodami*, 1694.

Codex Talmudicus de Jejunio ex Hebræo Sermone in Latinum
Verſus, & Commentariis illustratus, à Dan. Lundio. 8°. *Ultrajeſt.* 94.

Centaurium Minus adumbratum à Samuele Ledelio. Francofurti
ad Mænum, 8°, 1694.

Hollants Rouklagt, i. e. *Holland's Lamentation for the Death of
Mary Queen of Great Britain*, 4°, with Cuts. *Amſterdam* 1695.

Valeſiana ſive Meditamenta Critica, Hiſtorica & Moralia, ut &
Poemata Latina Hadriani Valeſii, &c. at *Paris* 12°. 1694.

Tractatus de ſitu Paradifi Terreſtris, auctore Petro Daniele
Huetio, 4°, at *Lipſick*. 1694.

Books lately printed at London.

ON Monday laſt was publiſh'd, The Remarkable Sayings, Apo-
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